

CHARLES VIEWER



1987

Scott -
Here is our literary
production for this year.
Hope you enjoy it.
Paula T.

CHARLES VIEWER

1987

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The CHARLES VIEWER is a student art and literary journal which is comprised entirely of the creative work of the students of Fisher Junior College. This magazine is edited and produced by students with the assistance of the Office of Student Services and the Office of Public Relations.

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THIRD ANNUAL
CHARLES VIEWER
ART AND LITERARY CONTEST WINNERS

Prose	Lesley Sninn	STARRY NIGHT
Poetry	Sarah Ellen Varley	THE CATCHER
Photography	Mary Caldwell	GLORIFIED KEDS
Art	Marla Zullo	WOMAN IN BLACK

HONORABLE MENTION

Prose	Mary Caldwell	THE STUD
Poetry	Marla Zullo and Sarah Ellen Varley	BONUS POINTS
Photography	Jacqui Phi Pham Urrasio	CONTINUITY
Art	Marla Zullo	GEISHA THOUGHT

ABORTION OF ROMANCE

I feel such an
odd, misplaced
gentleness
towards him
A sorrow
that is not explainable
No one sees his beauty
but I
He is a glowing infant
curious, gleeful,
eager, warm,
soft, sweet, sad,
innocent
I want to hold him
always...
My touchstone
my carefree sanity
I am his surrogate
I am his mother
Soon
I must cut the cord
tend to the wound
go on
impregnated with another liaison
but the first
infant lover lost
is an empty miscarriage
that leaves one
incomplete.

Mary Caldwell

CAGED

Caged in
The cocoon womb walls
Fight the dusk
And mourn the morn
Never to hold
The stars so close
To the waiting heart
Only be the egg
No one shall see
Not even God.

Saran Varley



I WATCHED YOU AS YOU WEPT

I watched you as you wept...
Very un-gender-like
Very deserving
You groveled,
Within yourself
You begged
Yourself
But
You didn't beg me
You knew better

There is a slice of me
Which weeps for you
But not with you.
As you seek
And cry out
For the past
Where the future hasn't
happened yet.

I'm sorry...
With mounting sarcasm

Marla Zullo

BREATHLESS

Air is so unspoken
no need for words,
no need to ask.
Air so precious and so valuable,
as we crave it.
Interpreted wrongly by many,
so blind and ignorant are we.
Air is so nameless, but dangerous are we.
Air is so safe, so vacant.
I have no fear of becoming breathless,
air leaves me unspoken.

Missy DeSiato

WINTER IS THE REASON

Winter is the reason
for the unflourished seed.
Its shield of coldness
does harden the shell.
With its harsh wind
it chaps the bud.
Nothing will move this
except for the dawning of Springtime
which will crack the shell
and the seed will eventually flourish.

Colleen Hare



TREE WITHOUT FAMILY
by Mary Caldwell

THE LONG WALK HOME

Snow covers the cobblestone walk
Water drips into the drains
Underneath my feet I feel
The rumbling of the trains
Through the fog I walk to my home
I feel like I'm entering the Twilight Zone
To myself I begin to sing and talk
My feet, slapping the puddles,
Are in tune; as I walk
I look up at the city and see
the thousands of lights
Now I'm home at last and
I slip out of the night.

Stacie Weldon

Leaves: forest confetti
Celebrating sleep to come
Nature takes a rest



Dawn Gagliardi

A thin blade of grass
Fighting with the cracked sidewalk
Soon to be stepped on

Maria Phillips

Deafening silence
Breaks the dawn of noiseless nights
Birds wake to the chimes

Sarah Varley

A BONDING

The most important day of my life was the day I was adopted. The events of that day have been etched so clearly in my mind that recollecting becomes a video playback. November 9, 1967, loomed gloomy with intermittent flurries but ended with a ray of sunshine. While driving on the Mass Pike to the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge to meet the social worker and me, my parents were filled with anticipation and a sense of relief that their prayers for a newborn had been answered. The meeting in Howard Johnson's parking lot was simply a formality and a means of transfer between the social worker and the new parents.

As the social worker's car pulled up in the November blizzard, both my parents proceeded to jump out of the car and rushed over to get the first glimpse of the newborn. My mother's first impression was the sight of a ball of pink with big blue eyes staring out at her. My father's first impression was how tiny I was. As my mother began to cry (as usual), she asked, "Can we take our baby home now?" The social worker replied, "She's all yours."

The ride home to Bellingham was hazardous due to the road conditions and the fact that I cried the whole way home, which increased my father's tension level. By 1:00 p.m. we had arrived at my new home which was filled with all the love and security my parents had to offer. Many close relatives and friends awaited impatiently, jumping out of their seats when they heard the car doors slam outside.

My mother's first act was to change me into my new pale yellow pajamas and heat up my formula. I was then placed gently into my white wicker crib, with a kiss from my mother and father as a promise to give all their love, guidance, and time to me. Everyone sat around my crib and watched me fall asleep. As the video of this day winds down, I am left with the impression that the love and security manifested that day was the initial bonding that continued to develop to the present.

Judith Raeke

Salt floats in love's tears
To fill the wide ocean's rim
Reminders of loss

Sarah Varley

THE ABYSS

Vacancies require inhabitation
And voids require filling.
To achieve the seemingly impossible
Is to achieve
The absence of absence.

Marla Zullo

SOFT SHADOWS MOVING SLOWLY

Soft shadows moving slowly
I see them in my mind
They are mine
They are calling
I must go to them
Sweet relief is in sight!
The walls are alive
They are a part of me
Life and death are one.

Andrea Bell



WOMAN IN BLACK
by Maria Zullo

THE ALTERNATIVE

Grasp tightly--
Hold on
To the dreams
You have
For reality--
Lose yourself
In a perfect world,
For reality
Holds chance
And pain
And ruin
So fall freely
Into the grayness
Of color...
Into the heaven
Of the imagination
And the end
Of the reality

Marla Zullo



GEISHA THOUGHT
by Marla Zullo

BONUS POINTS

You brought me flowers.
I laughed
But I took them.
You showered me with tears of remorse.
I rolled my eyes skyward
But threw you a tissue.
You tried with Godivas.
I crushed the box
When they were gone.
You gave me much.
You gave me little.
I've played this game before.
Bonus points
Do not affect
Your final grade.
Even with a curve
I do not allow cheating.
You are dismissed.

Sarah Varley and Marla Zullo



MARY JANE
by Rachel Curran

THE CATCHER

I stood waiting for the pitch
without a mitt
hoping the bouquet would come my way
the drum roll sounded
my opponents giggled
the audience hushed to muffled conversation
Sailing through the air
in slow motion
it flew
to be caught by me
to be kept by the bride
just like him.

Sarah Varley



THESPIAN VOID
by Mary Caldwell

MISTREATMENTS'S MUSICAL MASK

The bleeding beat
painful vibrations
angry high notes
god... she can stretch
those vocal cords.
Ignore it--
Ignore it--
when she swings.
Trill profanities
muffled by the strum
of an electric guitar.
It is just a bruise--
Some bass
will cover the scars.
The harmony
blurs reality.
A crooning soul
easing tension.

What did I do wrong?

Mary Caldwell

THE KEEPER

Rectangular form
Studded and secure
Guards paper memories
Lying ordered
Within.
Date by date,
Thought by thought
To reread and reveal.
The theme remains as
Subtle,
Yet powerful nonetheless.
And the emotion
Contained
Does still
Provoke
Tears.

Marla Zullo

AND I PROMISED YOU I'D ALWAYS BE YOUR FRIEND

And I promised you I'd always be your friend.
We shared with each other: my secrets, your dreams
And you said you'd always be there.
It seems that we've drifted too far apart now
But you didn't promise; you only said.
I look back now on the things we did together
And somehow what used to be happy times in my life
Are now faded memories that leave a melancholy mood in my mind
But you didn't promise; you only said.
So I'll try to put it behind me now, go on with life
There are so many things to remind me though
Things that I'm trying to forget
And sometimes I get angry with you
For lying about what we were going to do.
But then I remember: I was the one who promised;
You only said.

Laurie Ann Stevens

SAY CHEESE

The bureau is scattered with memories gone by
a graduation sash
a shrivelled carnation
and a photograph encased in gold
rich with age
worn from touch
and she is in the picture
I am on her skirted lap
we are smiling for the cameraman
he is her husband
my father
we share a secret
an inside joke
we think the future so far away
and did not see it coming
it intruded
without knocking
and she went with it.

Mary Caldwell

THE STUD

Whenever I see her my stomach knots up and I get a spasmodic tic in the lower right corner of my eye. God...to think of her drives me quite berserk and I'm placed in an almost psychotic state. Even her name is lovely...Valerie Vartelli--Ahh...like the sweet sounds of bells chiming.

How will I approach her? I think about it often. Perhaps we share the same interests. I wonder if she is as adamant a Star Trek fan as I am. Maybe she would enjoy viewing my rock collection. Who wouldn't be impressed with my prehistoric fossil...why--it's phenomenal. When I told my brother, Myron, that I was going to make an attempt at asking Valerie to the Junior Prom, he said it wasn't conceivable (actually he said, "When hell freezes over.")

A week ago I decided to give it a try, after all what did I have to lose besides pride, dignity and my future prospects of happiness? The perfect opportunity arose. It was lunchtime and she sat alone at a table. I combed back my hair with a touch of saliva and with lunch tray in hand I made my way over towards her. Just as I was coming close I tripped over Bull Marchese's Nike-clad foot. I fell flat on my face into my lasagna and Del Monte green beans. I must say I handled the situation with grace and poise.

It is not as if the attraction is not mutual. I could sense her telltale signs of infatuation. Just yesterday in algebra she said, "May I borrow your pencil?" If that wasn't the most clichéd pick-up statement I have ever heard. Of course I reacted in my usual suave manner replying, "Anytime, babe, anytime." She rolled her eyes (ever so seductively, with what looked to be smoldering desire). But that was yesterday.

I was the last to hear the news today. Bull is taking Valerie to the Junior Prom. Bull is lucky I didn't get to her first or she'd have a tough time deciding. Boy--that Bull has got another think coming, I saw them walking hand in hand. Bull should be thankful I'm a passive person.

Mary Caldwell

THE FULL MOON TOLD ME

The full moon told me
You would leave
For some cheap star
Who made your day
Does she shine only for you
Like I still do?

Sarah Varley

STARSTRUCK

I just snagged another run in my brand new Woolworth stockings and it's not one of the inconspicuous runs that I can easily cover up--no it's just my luck it goes from the hip down to my big toe...noticeable as hell.

The clock says quarter to twelve and any minute now the crowds will come rushing in...rude as usual. The businessmen in pinstripes smelling like they just stepped out of the shower, prissy women with newly coiffured hairdos in high-heeled pumps thinking that they're god's gift or something. But the worst thing of all 'bout the people that come in here is the kids...the little brats. The other day one of them brainless devils threw up all over the table and to make it worse he had just eaten a bowl of Cheerios. Of course my boss asked me to clean the mess up "On the double." It wasn't even my station. You cannot begin to imagine what it's like picking up little individual Cheerios one by one (they were still warm). Well, I can tell you I just about quit then and there. I got my pride y'know. I'll show them anyhow. See...I've got this plan--I'm gonna be a star. I know that one day a talent scout (the kind you read about in the movie magazines) is gonna come in here and discover me. So, when I see somebody that's got a look of importance or a certain how do you say, aura 'bout them, I treat them real special-like. I play real sweet, give him an extra cup of coffee, a toothy smile and I lean close as I can to him so as he can get a good look at me. Of course this method gets me in heaps of trouble sometimes cause most men only want one thing and that's S-E-X. So I have to be extra careful with who I'm dealing with. I can handle it though besides it's such a small price to pay for my chance at stardom. So...I'll keep crossing my fingers and praying to the good Lord 'cause someday...I'm gonna be somebody.

Mary Caldwell



ALMOST A VIRGIN
by Mary Caldwell

THE DECEIVERS

Your body lies on soft and quilted rags
Your soul does wander, raised above this place
Where lies are commonplace and still believed
The sickness of it all rests on your face

We lie here, realizing what's been done
Though we, in all the dirt, are both to blame
If anyone deserves you, it is me
Yet together, we wallow in the shame

So both of us shall share our love of lies
Do come to me without a known remorse
For in the darkness of our act of truth
We won't infect another's honest course.

Marla Zullo

THE WIND IS BLOWING SOFTLY OUTSIDE

The wind is blowing softly outside
my door.
Through the streets it whistles a sad
but beautiful song.
It takes me back to a long time ago
running through the fields,
running fast to keep up with the wind.
Not a care in the world
hearing my name echoing
through the trees.
Suddenly the wind blows violently
taking me back to reality.
Taking me back to the stress and rush
of the city life.

Debbie Lawless



VENUS' COUSIN
by Marla Zullo

NO LOVE LOST

Never again will I feel sorrow
Over a love that has gone; there is always tomorrow.

Life is too complicated and
Often too swift are the years;
Valued moments often
End in tears.

Live for each day.
Open your mind and open the door;
Soon with a courageous heart
True love will visit once more.

Dawn Gagliardi

FUTURE HOLDINGS

I sing alone
The empty home
Heartfelt joy now depression's drone
If things aspire
To something higher
The need to love is not as dire
(And I can seek what I desire)
Without the ill
And hopes to fill
The abyss which tears from me at will
And please--no wait
For in that state
No hope remains; just bitter fate

Marla Zullo



BLACK WIDOW
by Rachel Curran

ONE YELLOW FLOWER

I lifted my head just in time to see a small German Shepherd being dragged along the street by a man dressed in gray. He seemed to be in a hurry, and when the dog stopped to sniff a tree, he yanked at the leash and kicked the animal in the side. "What a loving world," I thought. I put my head in my hands and sighed. The trees outside the school were slowly swaying back and forth as if they had nothing else to do. The sky was gray, casting a gloomy shadow over the entire world, or at least over Beacon Street, where I sat.

I shivered as the wind breathed gusts of cold air at me. An old woman hobbled by, grasping her coat tightly about her neck while coughing. She feebly stepped on the black snow covering her front stairs, and with one last cough, she entered her apartment.

I decided to leave and began slowly walking down the crowded street. The people behind me pushed past me, grunting. I searched their faces for some kind of hope, but found only emptiness in their hollow expressions. Suddenly my eye caught a single yellow flower, rising triumphantly through the black snow on the sidewalk. I bent down to save it, but before I could, a big black shoe took its place, leaving the flower crushed and broken. All hope was drained from my soul.

I continued my journey, wishing that I could breathe without tasting dirt. Some children were attempting to play in the frozen playground. Even the merry-go-round, which I had loved as a child, looked harsh and cold under all the ice. I coughed in disgust and turned away. Finally I reached the gray stairs that led to my dorm. I climbed them, opened the creaking door, and went inside.

Andrea Bell

ONCE BITTEN

I unbuttoned my blouse and dropped it to the floor; then I stepped out of my pants and climbed into what looked like a coffin. I closed the cover and put on the earphones provided for me. Even though the music was loud enough to puncture my eardrums, it was relaxing. The heat began to warm my naked body. Soon I felt myself fall into a deep sleep. After a timed thirty minutes the lights went off, and I jumped and hit my head on the cover of my imitation sun.

Gena Ruocco

SPIN

The door to freedom opens
With a clockward turn of the wrist
In this cubicle
Meet the Messiah
Ease with the avenues
Escape to the longitude
No witnesses but the traffic lights
Greening the "okay" winks
With every shift the world moves
At 2:00 behind reflects
The neon sun giving life to moths
To right is Eden
To left is Heaven
To back up is irreversible

Sarah Varley

PAPA

It's sometimes hard for me to remember you now
And I promised myself I wouldn't forget
That last time I saw you, Papa.
I felt guilty for not visiting you.
But those hospital walls and that doctor smell
Just seemed to scare me away.
So I didn't go to say goodbye
When all the night I wanted to.
I knew that night: I felt it.
I remember standing at the kitchen sink
Crying as if I were a child that was lost
In a grocery store. Alone.
I promised myself I would never forget you.
That night I vowed always to keep you.
I don't see you anymore Papa, and I still feel a little guilty.
But I promise you, I'll keep you always, Papa,
On the front page of the scrapbook that
rests in my mind.

Laurie Stevens

SHE LEFT

When she left we noticed she had not taken the book with her. It is a beautiful book, handmade with a scarlet red leather cover. Pictures are carefully painted down with fine brush strokes to make a most beautiful work. Glancing through the book we notice the skill in her art to illustrate her words, delicate strokes of peacock blue lettering across the pages of fine rice paper. As we read the words they become a melody which flows as freely as a mountain stream to the lake below. The melody is a song of spring. We hear the trickling of the stream. Birds are chirping to the warm breeze blowing through the trees while the sunlight is shining down on the many wildflowers. Rustling noises make us think of young life. Forest babies alive in the new fresh world. The sun's rays glisten off the water. It's a magical fairyland so free from the outside world.

Cecily Moore

REALIZATION

I leave the city on the 5:35;
the sun is setting,
the sky is blending smoothly
from blues to grays to orange.
Why am I seeing this?
A melancholy song is drumming softly,
relaxing my mind.
It completes my mood and feelings.
My eyes brim with tears, but I suppress them
with all of my strength;
at times like this,
when everything seems wrong,
it seems I remember
small happenings in my life
that leave lasting impressions:
pleasant smells, feelings of security, smiles,
and words spoken at the right time.
I remember with fondness
a person who is now gone;
I want her to smile in her special way,
to laugh, and to feel the sun's warmth.
She has left too soon.

It's like a deep wound which leads to a longing
that makes my heart ache with emptiness.
A tiny part has been torn from my soul,
never to return.
A precious life was taken;
a life that was unique
slowly disintegrated,
and though we held on tightly,
it sifted through our hands,
and upon opening our clenched fists,
we discovered anger, bitterness, unendurable sorrow.

Maybe someday, Gracellen,
your tears that mourn her memory,
will create a smile,
spontaneous or slight,
tentatively,
afraid to show itself;
yet knowing it is right,
because you have reached a turning point,
a tragic loss
turns
to a fond remembrance,
and you'll smile through your tears,
and realize,
that all the pain was meant to lead to this moment,
that this moment belongs only to her.

Gracellen Lomonte

DAVID

The sunlight shines on the golden hair of a young man
Standing alone in his cement world
Locked within a ragged cage of the past--
Only he holds the key.

His mind is ever reaching for an unknown destiny
So much within him hiding in a shell of self defense
A beautiful person with no one to appreciate
Yet he keeps believing in himself and his dreams will come true.

The strength within him shows altered forms
A hungry lion trapped in a maze of confusion,
Taking away one brick at a time
Only needing love and freedom.

His love burns strong within an iron case;
He has suffered, but continues to believe
And his courage will take him far.

Our roads will part but I will always remember
Not many can see in his eyes,
Buried under layers of pain--
It has made him strong.

The light he shines will lead him on his way
And his heart will take him over the mountains
All I can give him is the best of luck.

Dawn Gagliardi



JOHN DOE DUDE
by Marla Zullo

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REMEMBRANCE

Do you remember a time when life was simple?
The biggest decision to make was what to play with next--
the dollhouse, the trucks, or perhaps some clay.
It seemed a difficult decision, and at the time, it was.

Now you're older; decisions are more difficult.
The dollhouse is hidden away in the attic;
the trucks are abandoned and rusted;
they served their purpose and are now deserted,
like your childhood.
At times, though, don't you long for those old relics?
Do you feel you want to rescue them from
cobwebs and dust and allow them to live again?
The same is true with your childhood, I'm sure.

It would be a relief to walk out of yourself
and back through the past,
into a smaller version of who you are now--
to be a child again.
To wonder about life,
to discover small joys,
and to be able to mend the pain
with a kiss and a cookie from mommy.
Now the pain must be mended in time, by you,
because mommy is no longer there.

You see clearly now, how things were so perfect--
the innocence and wonder in a child's expression,
their gentleness, and their vulnerability.
A child does not see colors; he is oblivious to them.
He sees only a friend or a playmate;
he remains honest and uncomplicated.

Children evolve into adults; they become suspicious.
They now see colors;
they become distrustful and complex.
It seems that the world could be ideal
if only one thing could prevail...
if children remained, forever, in their childhood;
for, when these children become adults
they use the world as their dollhouses,
the people in it as their puppets,
and their power as a weapon.

If childhood could only be captured,
preserved, and treasured,
perhaps at this moment
you could be releasing your dollhouse from the attic,
playing, without a care.

Gracellen Lomonte

NOT ANOTHER CHANCE

She sat in the back seat paralyzed with fear,
He drove recklessly while he sipped his beer.
Why didn't anyone else notice this?
Was she being too cautious?
The stale smell of cigarettes and beer
Hung heavily in the car.
It made her feel nauseous.
The loud, pulsating music echoed in her ears.
"Should I say something?"
"No, we'll make it home OK."
She felt around for the seatbelt; she found it,
Yet didn't put it on
For fear of looking foolish.
She desperately wanted to be a part of this in crowd
She couldn't ruin things now.
He ran the stop light--
She closed her eyes tightly: she prayed silently.
Her feet braced firmly against the floor.
Her whole body tensed...
Her palms sweated...
Her teeth clamped together like a vise.
"Maybe someone else should drive."
She, however, did not offer.
The lights blinded her...
The shrill screams deafened her...
The shattered glass cut her... AND
The drunk driver killed her...

Pamela Jean Bujnis

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

David and I strolled through the park. His tiny fingers held my hand tightly. Occasionally, he let go and scampered off to investigate the surroundings. He stared inquisitively at certain things, and he was fascinated with his findings. He tugged at my jacket to come and view his treasures. His trivial discoveries turned out to be a magnificent find. He exposed new things, as I rediscovered the old. He found things that many people have lost.

He simply saw his reflection in a puddle, saw the beauty of a flower, experienced its sweet scent, and the warmth of the sunshine, the brilliance of colors, the amazement of a squirrel, and the harmony composed by the birds flying overhead. These things made David smile, and I smiled, too. He giggled, and I found myself doing the same.

A four year old child showed me how to feel good without doing anything at all. Well, I did do something; I took a good look around. And to my amazement, it had all been right in front of my eyes. Only I was too blind to see.

Pamela Jean Bujnis



CHASTE POSER
by Mary Caldwell

A REVERIE OF INNOCENCE

Latitude, Longitude--
unknown.
Our canvas--
a greybearded Oak.
Our tool--
a well-earned
boyscout knife.
A cryptic message--
a chiseled thought.
a treasured whittling.
An understanding
that this memorial
would always be.
A pact in blood--
Our promise stood.
We were just sixteen--
and told to be "men."
He, always the unlucky,
went straight to the front.
I came home in glory.
He, in a box made from Oak.

Mary Caldwell



GLORIFIED KEDS
by Mary Caldwell



SNAPSHOTS THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS
by Mary Caldwell



NEIL'S PYRAMID
by Marla Zullo

WHERE IS THERE?

Do you remember
that night
a decade gone by?
We clung
with desperation to one another
and our escaping youth
Two siblings
you and I
left without
our matriarch spirit
The weeping
a last sign of
our childhood ignorance
Oh yes, eyes awakened
wretched end
we swore revenge
but wondered why
she never said goodbye.

Mary Caldwell

MY NATIVE LAND

Oh beautiful goddess,
How are you?
Our last day together was
on my birthday
Say ten years ago?
You brought me up half of my life.
I wish you were as free as I.
Please wait for me.
Liberty to Vietnam!

Jacqui Phi Pham Urrasio

COMMITMENT (NEVER SAY NEVER)

Am I,
getting too familiar?
Do you,
feel pursued,
or prodded?
In my motive there
exists no ulterior....
well, perhaps just a tad.
It's quite simple really
a mere promise
it's that easy
like a hand shake
only better
not imprisonment--
freedom is yours
for the asking.
In return?
a permanent tennis partner
and not one
T.V. dinner upon
your table.

Mary Caldwell

AN ILLEGITIMATE PRODUCT

Zelda fastened her seatbelt and let out a grunt of impatience at the plane's delay. Usually TWA was punctual--what a nuisance, as she did not want to be here anymore. She no longer felt welcome. The town had left a bitter taste in her mouth. This was unfamiliar and most unpleasant. More than anything Zelda wanted to reach into her worn Gucci bag and take out the pack of Merit cigarettes that peeked teasingly from the side pocket. Her "doc," as he was affectionately called, had warned her of the "effects of smoking on the human fetus." With this threat in mind she had agreed reluctantly not to smoke. Instead she bit her fingernails, what little was left of them.

Zelda cautiously recalled the events of the weekend in her mind. To say it had gone badly would be an understatement. It had been a catastrophe. Lord...she would give anything to have been born to liberated parents. She had chosen to tell her mother of her pregnancy as the two were preparing the dinner. Her mother upon hearing the news had gone on dicing and slicing the cucumbers as if she had not grasped the meaning. When Zelda reminded her mother "It is the 20th century," her mother had cried.

Her father's reaction was one of irrational anger. He told her not to look to him for emotional or financial support. He said that she'd end up in some backwater shack with nothing to keep her company but chickens and a dirty, squalling baby. In one last defiant shout he had called her "one of those feminist lesbians." So much for parental understanding.

Zelda felt very much alone, stranded without an ally. It seemed no one was on her side. Well...almost no one. Mechanically, as she often did for her only comfort, she placed her hand on her still-flat abdomen. A faint smile surfaced to her lips as she envisioned the life within her. Its due date was in the Spring. Oh, how she missed the Spring from past years. There were good memories. She remembered how her father used to toss her onto his broad shoulders at the first clang of The Good Humor Man's bell. There had been laughter. It had been real; at least she had thought so.

It seemed appropriate that the baby would come in Spring, her favorite season. The light scent of a Marlborough cigarette drifted softly into her nostrils from the seat behind and for a moment she inhaled its fragrance. With a gentle but satisfied sigh, Zelda settled back into the hard seat to enjoy the flight.

Mary Caldwell

Walk home, cobblestone
Singing, talk with the night air
Stars watch from above

Dawn Gagliardi

Crystal-clear teardrop
Perches upon my cold cheek
Here alone again

Dawn Gagliardi



CAT
by Jacqui Phi Pham Urrasio

TIME

Decay:
To rot--
In this case,
from the inside out.
From the soul
to the heart
from the heart
to the lips
until they crack
with screech and speech
and the blood
flows
down my chin
and my tears
dilute.

Marla Zullo



THE MORNING AFTER
by Mary Caldwell

OCEANOGRAPHY

At separate intervals
In an existence plagued with spaces
There were moments
Passed there
Vivid are the memories;
I can feel the chill
Of the salt-flavored air
And the absence of light
In the immediate surroundings
Providing strength.
The companions differ,
Each unique in the
Moments left behind.
Each mine alone,
For I am the only other
Common denominator.

Marla Zullo

THE HOUSE WHERE I LIVE

I live in a beautiful house, high on a hill. This house overlooks fields of lush green grass and gently rolling hills. Off in the distance, the mountains are so high that the peaks are invisible because of the clouds around them. On all sides of the house, for as far as the eye can see, it is the same scene. The house stands as proud as a peacock against the backdrop which Mother Nature created.

The house is old, yet it retains its elegance. The weather-beaten shingles have stayed intact, even through the longest, coldest winter. Right now it is summer and the sun is radiating its warmth down upon the house where I live.

This is a happy home, filled with loving, caring people. These people believe in me and love me for who I am now, and not who I will become later. The people I live with are honest in their wants, needs, loves, and cares.

This is a world so unlike ours, where people are not selfish and demanding. In this world, the feelings of others are of the utmost importance. This is a place where people actually listen and don't just nod. No snap judgements are made here. Everyone is welcomed with open arms and a warm embrace.

If I could, I would spend my life here, free from suffering and pain. I would spend my life here, free from the world that seems to suck the humanity from us and replaces it with selfish wants.

This house of mine, so high on a hill, so, so, far away, is the place where I live. This house of mine, so far away from the Barbie doll clones, with their fake smiles and the soap opera lives of the rich and famous.

This house of mine is my escape. When I am sad, there is happiness. When I am cold, there is warmth; when I am feeling alone, there are people who love me and keep me company.

Although this place exists only in my mind, this is what I live for. I live to find this utopia in whatever form it may be. A house on a hill in the serenity of the countryside or in the early morning songs of birds as they welcome the new day.

Darlene Ruggeri

THE BATTLE

The blue sky that stretched for miles and miles served as the battlefield. The celestial body dominated the clear blue sky. In an instant, he spotted his enemy. It was obvious that the opponents were plotting a strategy as they slithered in from the east. They were determined to conquer. The battle had begun.

The mighty ball of fire faced his equally powerful opponent once again. The clouds embarked on their conquest. They blanketed the sky trying to smother the sun. Not a single ray was to warm the earth. Their grey fatigues blocked out the brightness in a single sweep. They marched closely together so the rays could not penetrate.

The sun, however, did not surrender. Streams of rays sliced through the clouds fighting them off like gallant knights. The opponent was wounded. Rain pellets gushed from the open wounds. The sun continued to blaze through and injure his enemy, without mercy. A loud bang echoed through the air as the clouds fell to their knees in agony. Lightning protruded from them in a final burst of energy.

All hope quickly diminished as the sun rose to a magnificent height in the sky. The clouds drifted away as the sun glared with victory. Both acknowledged the fact that some day soon, they would draw their swords once again.

Pamela Jean Bujnis



SUNBURST
by Marla Zullo

BEACH MEMORIES

I feel the blazing rays of the sun beat down on my bare back. The breeze coming across the crystal blue ocean cools me. I am in a state of complete peace. The waves brush up onto the sandy beach in a repeating motion. I slowly walk along the beach letting my feet be touched by the warm water.

I am alone. I listen to the noises around me. Gulls are cawing at the fishing boat in the distance. One soars down and grabs a fish, leaving the other seagulls in a frenzy.

The surf has me in a lulled state. I take out my journal and draw, keeping the memories of the beach with me, forever restored on paper.

Cecily Moore

WELCOME

Welcome sunshine to my life
Radiant beams surrounding my world
Spread warmth and comfort to my days
Dry my glistening tears with your hot breath
Pave my roads with happiness.

Andrea Bell

As an ocean wind
Would throw clouds at a bright moon
So am I to you

Maria Phillips

Christmas lights glow bright
Through the darkening evening
Bulbs reflect the light

Jill Pfanner

HOW?

Victoria sauntered into the room. An air of dignity surrounded her. She held her head high and her shoulders back. In a moment, she noticed her. Oh, how she loathed that woman. She couldn't bear to look at her, yet she stared. Victoria stabbed the woman with the piercing glare emanating from her eyes. She detested everything this woman stood for.

The woman she stared at was a fraud. She was happy once, but not any longer. She abandoned her true self for this foolish façade. Once independent, she now relied on her husband and his extraordinary wealth. No longer did she care about love, emotion, or values. Now she was obsessed with money and power.

The woman's face, once beautiful and carefree, displayed the cold emotions of a statue. Her icy, black eyes held nothing, not a sparkle of life. She had even given up her favorite nickname for the sake of the family.

Victoria could stand it no longer. In an instant, she snatched the crystal swan off the table and hurled it into the mirror. The mirror shattered. The reflection Victoria now saw was a fragmented image of herself.

"How, how could you have let this happen to yourself, Tory?" she cried.

Tears streamed down her face as she stared at the distorted images in the mirror.

Pamela Jean Bujnis



THE MOURNING
by Mary Caldwell

MEMORIES

The possession I value most cannot be appraised; it has no material value.

To me, however, it is priceless.

It cannot be seen,

It cannot be stolen
or lost.

It is stored within my mind,
yet more so in my heart.

It is simply the gift of memory.

And through my memory...my mother lives.

When I unlock my treasure chest,

She is remembered...
loved... and missed so very much.

As I indulge in the sweetness of reminiscing, she is with me.

I can feel her presence, her guidance, and her love.

Although God has taken her from me,
he has given a special gift.

Here, she will live forever, because he would never take this
beloved gift away.

Pamela Jean Bujnis



SIMPLY RED
by Mary Caldwell

A PLACE TO ESCAPE

I wiggle my toes in the jeweled sand,

As I sit mesmerized by the view,
There is power and beauty here.

The rhythm of the waves crashing against the shore surpasses any
composed by man.

The sun's rays beaming upon the water provide a gateway to the
heavens.

Floating through this gateway
is an angel,
delivering all the warmth from the sun.

I can feel this on my face, as well as
in my heart.

A feeling of complete tranquility descends on me.

Here, I gaze longingly into the exquisite ocean.

Pamela Jean Bujnis

WHEN I'M STRONG

So much time has passed, yet I still cannot enter.
Just once I wish I could walk in
Without tears clouding my vision,
Without my stomach trembling with fear,
Without that eerie chill that causes me to quake.
Each time I try, I walk away defeated.
Yet what am I running from?
I know what it is, I know I cannot win.
I hide from a reality I cannot face.
I stare coldly at the sign that hangs from the pole
"St. Margaret's Cemetery" is written in such elegant letters.
My head feels heavy: my vision blurs.
I enter...
Knowing fully what lies ahead...
I see his bleak grey tombstone in the distance.
Many others rest before his, but his is the only one I can see.
My eyes fixate on the morbid rock.
My legs grow weak...
My feet are frozen to the very ground on which I stand.
On, God give me strength!
Strength never arrives--I cannot wait any longer.
I flee quickly back to the car; it is safe here.
Wiping my eyes, I stare blankly into space.
Wondering...
Wondering why this ever happened...
Why to him?
I start the engine, the life of the car soothes me.
I proceed to drive away, yet I stop to look back.
My voice cracks...
"I'll come back my love, I'll come back to see you when I'm strong."

Pamela Jean Bujnis

I AM DOWN

I am down upon my knees, at my lowest point
I cannot turn towards my friends even when I know
They are there for me
I haven't the power to control what's happening to me
I'm becoming lost--deeper and deeper, I hide myself from reality
Every hour, every day, every week drags on
Nothing to do but sit and think
And when I think, life passes me by.
It's the same old thing, day in, day out
I ask myself a lot of questions that I can never answer
It's cold where I am, as if the moon and
Sun no longer exist.

Lisa Lundin

FAR FAR (FOR SWEDISH GRANDFATHER)

by the window in the sunlight he sits alone in a room full
of memories,
he is still strong, though his world is crumbling fast--
closing in.
wrapped in a woolen shawl, hand on his cane, he moves.
slowly, he makes his way to his bedroom where he painfully
applies his medicine.
anger, fear, and emptiness are all he feels.
anger from all the years of hurting, all the harsh
words said, both at him and from him.
fear his years are ending too quickly by the day,
and the emptiness of the big old house that once rang with
laughter echoes with loneliness.

Lisa Lundin

Seasons turn the page
For yet another season
Always another

Maria Phillips

Snow falls heavily
Everything getting covered
Melted by the sun

Jill Pfanner

MUCH

Share with me each day as if it were our last, our first.

Stay with me through days, both the best and worst.

You are my truest friend, of value more than gold,

You know I love you very, and confirm that you are told.

Dawn Gagliardi

SEARCHING

echoing sounds throughout the land, for all who wish to hear,
chilling bones into fragments of raw souls,
centered on searching for warmth in cold hearts, steel eyes
and clammy palms,
searching evermore for new beginnings,
to outlive the winters of our souls,
death accompanies winter, never seeing spring--the new
awakening, the only chance for change within ourselves.

Lisa Lundin

GRANDMOTHER

I can remember as a child,
Her face withered with age,
The lines could tell many stories
Of her life;
She had spoken with such grace and knowledge.
A person I admired,
But the woman with such wisdom and strength
Was so weak
Fighting a disease--
Having to take shots of insulin daily
Trying to keep alive
And to show joy in her face--
Even though she was in pain.
Grandmother,
You could not hide beneath
Those weary eyes
You tried to smile,
But I could see--
You were in misery.
This illness overtaken
So fragile you were to fight--
It gained its strength,
And took your precious life away.

Anita Salmu

IT CALLS ME TO ITS JAGGED SHORE

It calls me to its jagged shore.
I find myself there time and time again.
Staring at its open arms and listening to its soothing charms.

The sea like a friend will never let me down.
It listens to my sorrows and washes them away.
It reminds me time and again that tomorrow's another day.

I admire the sea's human-like qualities.
It is deep and warm, powerful and strong.
And shows no prejudice at all.

It lets its tenants live for free.
Ships sail upon its weary back.
Its chest rises and falls like a lover's sigh beneath the
starry sky.

My friend the sea is still a mystery.
It will always have its secrets.
But I know someone who can make it swoon and that is my
other friend the moon.

Jennifer Pisano

OF THOSE IN ETHIOPIA

black, thin, weak,
listlessly lifting their limbs,
moving ever-so-slowly,
seeking just nourishment to live,
surrounded by famine, yet
surrounded by a world of abundance,
crying for help to deaf ears;
dying is their only sport--
one by one, and then they're gone.

Lisa Lundin

CIRCLE OF GOLD NEVER ENDING

Circle of gold never ending
Shiny stone never dull
Light dances upon its prism
Colors bursting from its glow

Circle of gold never ending
If I had a million of thee
I would be rich but it wouldn't compare
To how much you mean to me

Jennifer Pisano

OLD EYES

the sun is my only witness to what i'm about to do
i'll pick a daffodil of yellow gold and bring it to
my nose
smelling the beautiful scent created by mother nature,
thinking how this flower was made to bring sunshine to
an old woman's eyes
warmth and happiness swell in her bosom of abundant love.
not only for the beauty in the flower, but the thought
of receiving--so many years of giving have finally
ended for her
it is her day to receive the joy of life that a single
flower can give.

Lisa Lundin

NIGHT WALKING

walking through the night, cold and wet,
silent
stillness filling the air, a feeling of
completeness
alone, but not afraid,
searching the night for others,
like me.
those who walk alone
on dark, wet nights,
hoping always for something better,
living without change,
constantly wondering why.
why i chose a certain pathway,
towards emptiness and despair,
never knowing where my path will lead me,
awaiting the arrival of a better day.

Lisa Lundin

Wind blowing fiercely
A hook moon hangs in the sky
While the nightbird sings

Maria Phillips

Love is one thing that
Not one person can define
In a perfect way

Cathy DePinto

OBSERVATIONS

I needed some fresh air so I picked up my keys and went to sit on the front steps of my dorm.

I sat on the first step, closest to the door, and wrapped my arms around my body to keep warm. It struck me as funny that the only place I could go to be alone was Beacon Street, in Boston. Alone, I watched the people stroll by. I wondered if they had someplace important to go, or if they were escaping, too.

Since I came to live in the city I no longer notice the cars driving by, screeching their brakes, and then the wonderful, enlightening conversations the drivers have. What brotherly love, huh? At night these things don't matter. Night is the only time to hide from people because nobody can actually see you in the dark. I shifted my position on the steps and stared into the darkness.

An old lady walked by carrying one of those see-through plastic bags with large green flowers on it. She walked painfully and slowly with her head held down. She looked like everyone's grandmother, but in the dark she looked very lonely. Why isn't she walking with her grandchildren, I thought. She shouldn't have to be alone, like me. I felt a tremendous urge to call out to her, just to say hi or something. I didn't. I know the reaction I would have gotten.

I looked at my watch as she passed by. I had to go back to the fluorescent light in my room. I smiled weakly and pushed my hands against my knees to stand up. I unlocked the door as slowly as possible and went inside to try and explain to my roommates where I had been.

Eileen Spellman

INNOCENCE IS FRAGILE

Innocence is fragile, like all precious things
When you see the real world it crumbles apart
The weak can't survive in this world
Because a gentle soul is torn to pieces.

Society doesn't allow a sensitive heart
It doesn't accept a true romantic
Angles are in, not soft sculptures
Flowers are replaced with green money
Poems are replaced by prenuptial agreements
And love is a four-letter word.

The few who fight for their spirits
Are changed or destroyed
They are considered different or wrong
Because they are dreamers.

I hope that some of these people survive
So my children won't grow up in a world of storm
I wish I had the strength and courage
To let my dreams and spirit run free
But I know I'm a victim, too.

Eileen Spellman

THE RAINY SEASON

Heat--oppressive and damp--filled lungs with heavy air, forcing stillness on the barracks. The quiescent night was punctured occasionally by the screams of men rudely awakened by tiny geckoes dropping from ceilings onto bare chests.

Thus, the startled soldier lay thinking of better places and times. The hottest nights at home couldn't compare with DaNang's rainy season. He recalled sipping lemonade on the front porch with his family, Momma fanning herself with the tiny hand-painted fan Gram gave her as a young girl. Daddy read Faulkner and Hemingway aloud to the family, pausing to explain a passage to Maddie. He remembered his impatience whenever Maddie interrupted to ask a question. Now he would give anything to hear her inquisitive young voice.

The rain had begun again, slowly at first, stealing up on the night like an enemy. As the patter grew louder and more rapid, it became more of an ally, providing the barest whisper of a breeze and drowning out the soldier's memories.

Lesley Shinn

STARRY NIGHT

The sheets twist and turn, tying her down, preventing wakefulness and safety. Her eyelids have lead weights in them, but finally she forces them up. The world swims before her, her gold alarm clock floats above the oak dresser, the door blurs into the wall. Not again, she bets herself. Disentangling herself from the sheets, she tries to decipher the swirling objects before her. The blues must be the curtains, the yellows, the city lights creeping into the room. Green hues twine among the blues, her plants perhaps? Struggling to lift herself up, she crawls to the foot of the bed, blinking in a vain attempt to see more clearly.

Ever since his death she had awakened, alone, to murky, muddled episodes such as this. Never before, however, was it this bad. Struggling to get off the bed, she tries to direct herself toward the blues and greens of the window. When she reaches out to open the curtains her hands touch not a window, but a large frame. Startled, she realizes that she is not in front of the window, but before his favorite Van Gogh.

Reminded of him, she begins to cry, until she hears a tiny voice calling to her. She feels herself being pulled toward the picture. Yes, she thinks, I'll become one of the stars, too. As she slips into the frame, she feels only a brief, sharp pain, then nothing.

On the street below her window, a crowd gathers under the street lamp to see the crumpled body of the young woman, tangled in a blue curtain.

Lesley Shinn

DAY'S END

The day is coming to an end and the sun wants to melt into the blue
sky.
As you step onto the sand you feel it flow between your toes and
your feet sink deep.
The sun, still shining, lies on the water, creating mysterious
reflections.
The empty cartons, soda cans, and the tube of tanning lotion half
buried in the sand leave you thinking of yesterday's ventures.
As you walk barefoot along the water, the waves crash at your feet
inviting you back for a last swim.
The footprints of couples who wandered by in the past are washed
away leaving loneliness.
The cool breezes shift across the water sending a wave of fear up
your spine.
Seagulls glide over, calling out to one another at day's end ...
then once again evening descends.

Paula Savona



COUNTER CULTURE
by Mary Caldwell



PAKISTANI
by Maria Zullo

